

(12) United States Patent

Ishihara et al.

(54) ARTICLE OF APPAREL INCORPORATING A COVERED ELECTRONIC DEVICE

(75) Inventors: James Alec Ishihara, Beaverton, OR

(US); YeongKyu Yoo, Beaverton, OR (US); Edward Lang Boyd, Portland, OR

(US)

(73) Assignee: Nike, Inc., Beaverton, OR (US)

Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this

patent is extended or adjusted under 35

U.S.C. 154(b) by 2034 days.

Appl. No.: 11/358,743

Feb. 22, 2006 (22) Filed:

(65)**Prior Publication Data**

US 2007/0194066 A1 Aug. 23, 2007

(51) Int. Cl. A41D 20/00 (2006.01)A41B 1/08 (2006.01)

(52) U.S. Cl.

(58) Field of Classification Search USPC 2/125, 123, 115, 170, DIG. 11, 910, 917 See application file for complete search history.

(56)References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

1,374,257 A	»k	4/1921	Van Raalte 2/160
1,416,654 A	*	5/1922	Lenneberg 224/217
1,763,929 A	*	6/1930	Kellner 368/282
1,857,195 A	»įc	5/1932	Karpf 368/281
2,076,221 A	*	4/1937	Bradbury 368/281
2,103,711 A	×	12/1937	Cole
2,182,830 A	sk.	12/1939	Vedder 368/281
2,227,131 A	*	12/1940	Friedman 368/281

US 8,677,515 B2 (10) **Patent No.:** (45) **Date of Patent:** Mar. 25, 2014

4,117,662 A * 10/1978 van der Lely 368/27 4,155,219 A * 5/1979 Anderson 368/28 4,281,389 A * 7/1981 Smith 702/17 4,387,838 A * 6/1983 Jackson 224/17 4,509,644 A * 4/1985 Kulick 206/46
4,509,644 A * 4/1985 Kulick 206/46

(Continued)

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

CH	536 083	4/1973
CH	685 586	8/1995
DE	296 16 787	3/1997

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Wood you believe it? http://www.t3.co.uk/news/247/general/general/wood_you_believe_it?SQ_DESIGN_NAM, dated Dec. 2, 2005.

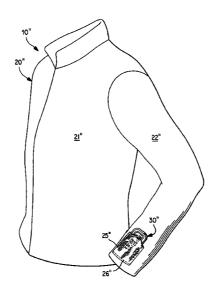
(Continued)

Primary Examiner — Alissa L Hoey (74) Attorney, Agent, or Firm — Banner & Witcoff, Ltd.

(57)**ABSTRACT**

An article of apparel is disclosed that includes a covered electronic device. The apparel is at least partially formed from a material element that defines an aperture. The electronic device is locatable within the aperture and secured to the material element. A material covers the electronic device such that the electronic device cannot be seen. Upon activation of the electronic device, the readout is seen through the material. The electronic device may be a timing device, such as a watch, or a global positioning system unit. The apparel may be a wristband formed from a textile material or any of a variety of other types of apparel.

37 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



(56) References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

D281,674	\mathbf{S}	¥	12/1985	Novak D10/31
D287,229	\mathbf{S}	*	12/1986	Hallman et al D11/5
4,627,739	Α	*	12/1986	Shingo et al 368/282
4,645,102	Α		2/1987	Proellochs
4,684,264	Α	*	8/1987	Paperno et al 368/283
4,685,599	Α	×	8/1987	Israel et al 224/170
4,761,835	Α	*	8/1988	Chen 2/160
4,766,611	Α	*	8/1988	Kim 2/160
4,769,799	Α		9/1988	Matsukage
4,862,521	Α	*	9/1989	Mann 2/160
4,916,679	Α	*	4/1990	Agnello 368/283
4,918,759	Α	×	4/1990	Anderson et al 2/209.7
4,922,850	Α	*	5/1990	Conley 116/222
5,035,000	Α	*	7/1991	Matthias 2/123
5,117,508	Α	n)c	6/1992	Gunter 2/160
D330,679	\mathbf{S}	*	11/1992	Bland D10/32
D335,023	S	*	4/1993	Hutcheson D2/612
5,272,682	Α	sk.	12/1993	Falcone 368/281
5,332,135	Α	*	7/1994	Fletcher 224/164
5,341,972	Α	×	8/1994	Jacks 224/165
5,377,046	Α	sk.	12/1994	Ryan 359/599
D355,132	\mathbf{S}	*	2/1995	Williams D10/32
5,584,133	Α	N.	12/1996	Motooka et al 40/642.02
5,610,877	Α	×	3/1997	Adams et al 368/10
5,623,731	Α	*	4/1997	Ehrgott et al 2/160
5,684,758	Α	sk.	11/1997	Gray et al 368/10
5,704,067	Α	*	1/1998	Brady 2/170
5,738,526	Α	*	4/1998	Cerda et al 434/304
5,749,841	Α	sk:	5/1998	Moore 602/21
5,775,011	Α	*	7/1998	Reitano, Jr 36/136
5,812,500	Α	*	9/1998	Webb, Jr 368/282
5,838,642	Α	×	11/1998	Tully 368/282
5,848,030	Α	*	12/1998	Sullivan 368/282
5,924,135	Α		7/1999	Worth
6,079,049	Α	ak.	6/2000	Moir 2/69

6,199,730	B1 *	3/2001	Chisolm	224/164
6,213,634	B1 *	4/2001	Harrington et al	. 368/283
6,234,668	B1 *	5/2001	Cooper	. 368/281
6,272,075	B1 *	8/2001	Paganelli et al	368/10
6,519,207	B1 *	2/2003	Lukacsko	368/10
D471,114	S *	3/2003	Chong	
6,561,814	B2 *	5/2003	Tilbury et al	439/37
6,563,424	B1 *	5/2003	Kaario	
6,685,634	B1 *	2/2004	Fry	. 600/300
6,728,971	B1 *	5/2004	Benavidez	2/161.4
6,799,887	B1 *	10/2004	Kinney	. 368/282
6,870,796	B2 *	3/2005	Elling	368/10
D503,895	S *	4/2005	Black	D10/32
6,895,261	B1 *	5/2005	Palamides	455/575.6
7,041,032	B1 *	5/2006	Calvano	482/4
7,120,936	B2 *	10/2006	DeSantis	2/123
7,124,447	B2 *	10/2006	Arganese	2/160
7,168,098	B2 *	1/2007	West	2/93
7,252,215	B1 *	8/2007	Furnas, II	. 224/170
D564,372	S *	3/2008	Bhavnani	D10/40
7,380,287	B2 *	6/2008	DeSantis	2/123
2004/0040872	A1*	3/2004	Christie	. 206/320
2005/0246823	A1*	11/2005	Groom	2/247
2006/0117458	A1*	6/2006	Ishihara et al	2/170
2007/0107456	A1*	5/2007	Yeager	62/331
2007/0245444	A1*	10/2007	Brink	2/69
2007/0261703	A1*	11/2007	Gheneva et al	. 131/231
2009/0074224	A1*	3/2009	Wright	. 381/385
			-	

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

International Search Report in corresponding PCT application, International Application No. PCT/US2005/036666, mailed Feb. 23, 2006

Five Photographs of a timepiece that was commercially available from Claire's Boutique in 2004.

^{*} cited by examiner

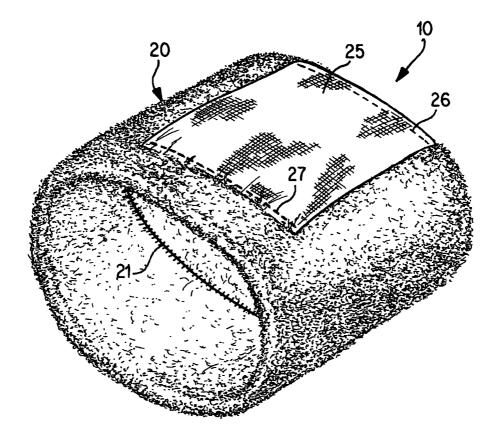


Fig. 1

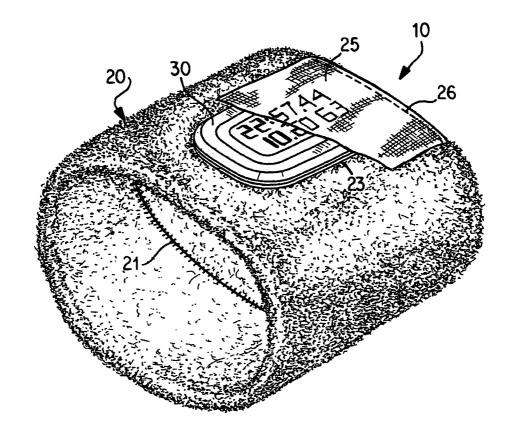


Fig. 2

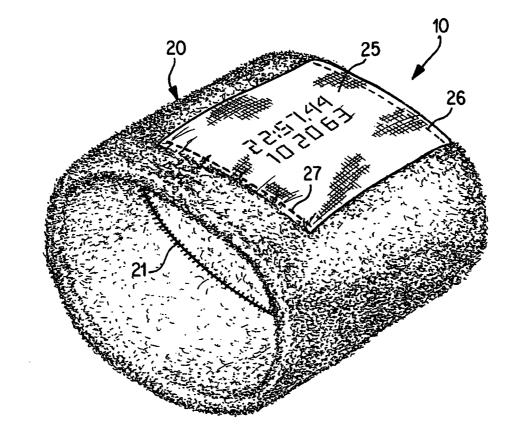


Fig. 3

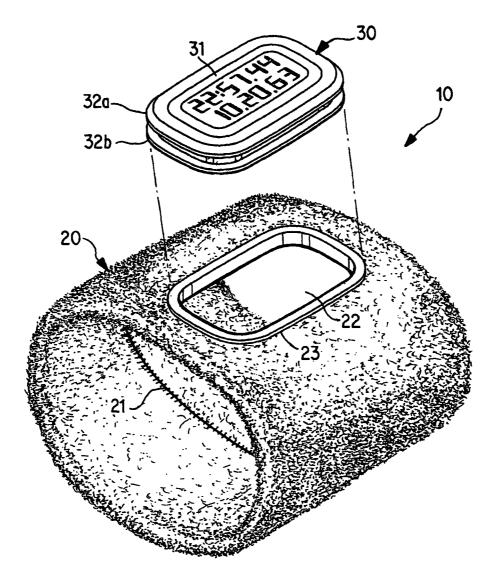


Fig. 4

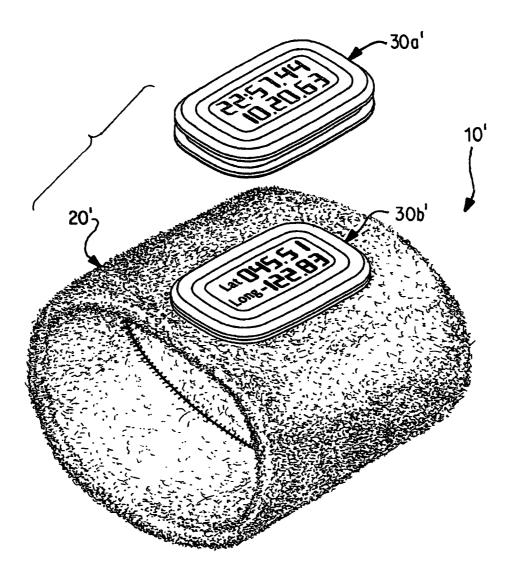


Fig. 5

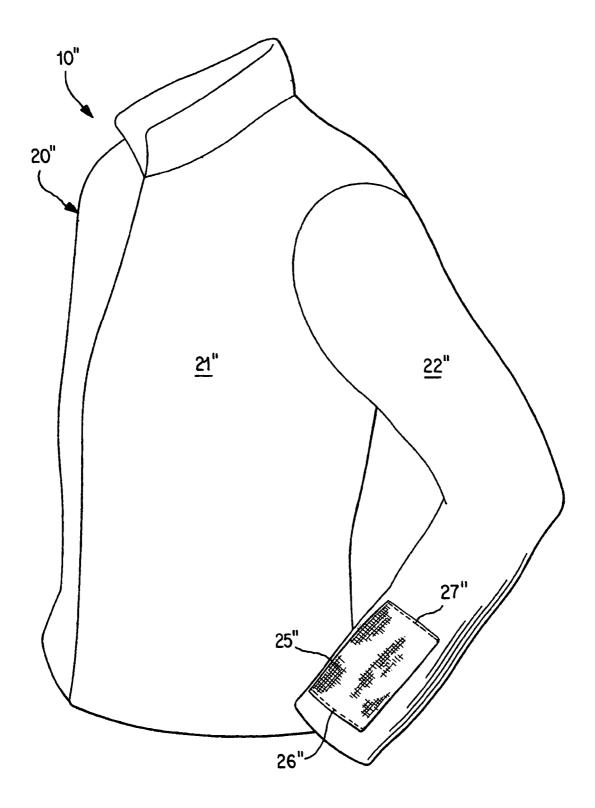


Fig.6

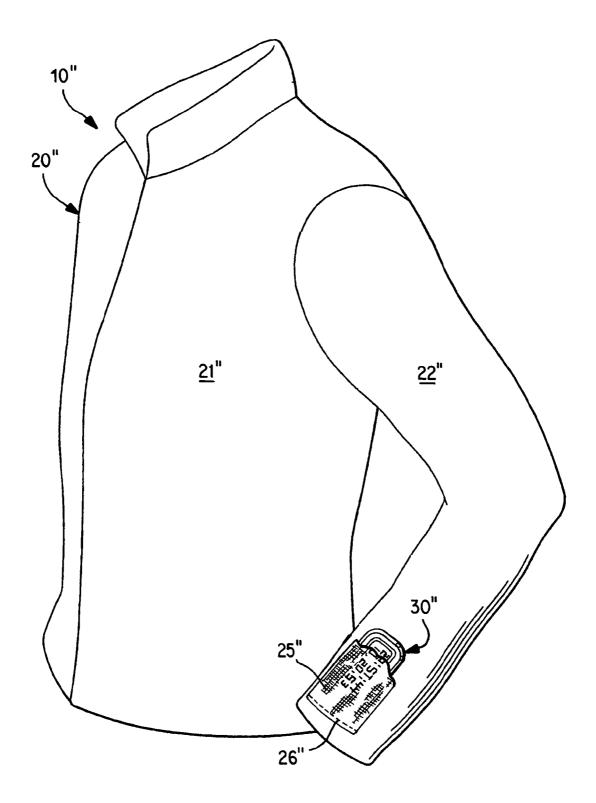


Fig. 7

10

1

ARTICLE OF APPAREL INCORPORATING A COVERED ELECTRONIC DEVICE

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to apparel. Aspects of the invention concern, more particularly, an article of apparel that incorporates an electronic device that is hidden by and viewed through material.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Athletes utilize a variety of electronic devices to assist with training exercises or competitions. For example, an athlete may make use of a timing device to track and display time, 15 record split or lap times, provide chronographic data, or function as an alarm. Global positioning systems may also be utilized to calculate distances and, in combination with a watch or other timing device, calculate an average velocity. In addition, the electronic devices may function to gauge the 20 temperature of surrounding air, determine altitude or direction, monitor heart rate, facilitate communication between two or more individuals, provide audible signals to pace the velocity of the wearer, or display the date. Accordingly, a variety of electronic devices may be utilized during training 25 exercises or competitions to assist the athlete or impart an advantage to the athlete.

Each of the electronic devices discussed above may be incorporated into a wrist-mounted unit. As an example, a timing device (i.e., a watch) may include an electronic timing ³⁰ element, a case, and a band. The electronic timing element is located within the case and functions to track the time and display the time for a wearer or another individual. The case functions to protect the electronic timing element and often includes a transparent face for viewing a time display on the electronic timing element. The band extends from opposite sides of the case and secures the case and electronic timing element to a wrist of the wearer.

Although a majority of watches include the electronic timing element, case, and band, modem watch designs include a 40 plurality of variations upon these components. The electronic timing element, for example, may be replaced by a mechanical movement or an element with a combination of mechanical and electrical features. The band may incorporate a clasp that secures the watch to the wrist, or the band may exhibit an 45 open, bracelet-like configuration. Furthermore, the materials that form the various components may include both polymers and metals, for example. Differences in the various elements forming watches may be utilized, for example, to provide enhanced utility to the wearer, decrease the mass of the watch, 50 or enhance the aesthetic appeal of the watch.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Aspects of the present invention include an article of 55 apparel, such as a wristband or jacket that includes an electronic device. The apparel is at least partially formed from a material element that defines an aperture. The electronic device is locatable within the aperture and permanently or removably-securable to the material element. A flexible 60 material covers the electronic device such that the electronic device is not seen. Upon activation of the electronic device, the readout of the electronic device is visible through the material. The electronic device may be a timing device, such as a watch, or a global positioning system unit.

The material covering the face of the electronic device may be permanently or temporarily affixed to the apparel. The 2

electronic device is activated through the material. When activated, the display of the electronic device is visible through the material.

The electronic element may be removed from the aperture. When removed, the apparel may be subjected to a washing process in the absence of the electronic element. Also, the electronic element may be interchanged with another electronic element.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The foregoing Summary of the Invention, as well as the following Detailed Description of the Invention, will be better understood when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a first article of apparel in accordance with an aspect of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the first article of apparel in accordance with an aspect of the present invention wherein the covering material is partially cut away to view the hidden electronic device.

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the first article of apparel in accordance with an aspect of the present invention wherein the display of the electronic device is visible through the material

FIG. 4 is a first exploded perspective view of the first article of apparel in accordance with an aspect of the present invention without the covering material.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a second article of apparel in accordance with an aspect of the present invention without the covering material.

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a third article of apparel in accordance with an aspect of the present invention.

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of a third article of apparel in accordance with an aspect of the present invention wherein the covering material is partially cut away to view the hidden electronic device.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The following discussion and accompanying figures disclose various articles of apparel that incorporate an electronic device and have a covering material that covers the electronic device. The articles of apparel and electronic devices include those described in co-pending application Ser. No. 10/987, 577 which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

In general, the articles of apparel are formed from a material element, such as a textile or polymer sheet, that defines an aperture. The electronic device may be positioned within the aperture and secured to the material element. In addition, the electronic device may be detached from the material element and removed from the aperture. That is, the electronic device may be separated from a remainder of the article of apparel. This configuration permits the remainder of the article of apparel, including the material element, to go through a washing process in the absence of the electronic device, thereby decreasing the probability of damaging the electronic device during the washing process. This configuration also permits the electronic device to be interchanged with one of a plurality of other electronic devices that perform a different function.

In particular, a flexible covering material is attached to the material element so that the covering material at least partially covers the face of the electronic device such that the electronic device cannot be seen when the apparel is being worn. This allows the user to wear the apparel with the electronic device unseen. When the electronic device is activated,

the display is at least partially visible through the material and is readable. The display may be modifiable between an unilluminated and illuminated configuration. The covering material is sufficiently flexible in that the material can partially conform against the electronic device. This allows the display 5 to be read through the covering material. If the covering material is too stiff, the material may not conform against the display and the display may not be seen through the material.

The covering material may be permanently attached, such as sewn, or removably attached, such as with Velcro. Of 10 course combinations of permanent and removable attachment may be used such as the covering material being sewn onto the material element at one end and attached by Velcro at another end.

The material covering the electronic device protects the 15 device from harm such as being scratched. The material is lightweight and allows light from the electronic device, e.g. LED, to shine or glow through the material in such a manner that the display can be read. The electronic device can be activated through the material by touch, e.g. depressing a 20 display button. Thus, the material should be sufficiently flexible to allow the user to activate the electronic device through the covering material. The electronic device can be activated underneath the material by touch if only a portion of the material is attached to the material element. Again, the mate- 25 the electronic device 30 and is attached to the wrist band 20. rial should be sufficiently flexible to allow the user to activate the electronic device underneath the material.

An article of apparel 10 is depicted in FIG. 1 as including a wristband 20 and a covering material 25 attached to the wristband. As depicted in FIG. 2, an electronic device 30 is 30 attached to the wristband, and covering material 25, shown partially covering the electronic device 30. FIG. 3 shows the wrist band 20 having covering material 25 attached to the wristband and the display of the electronic device being visible through the material.

In general, apparel 10 forms a dual-purpose device that may assist athletes with training exercises or competitions. For example, wristband 20 may be utilized to absorb and remove perspiration or other moisture from areas proximal lized to track and display time, record split or lap times, provide chronographic data, or facilitate communication between two or more individuals (i.e., as a wireless phone or two-way communication device).

Following the training exercises or competitions, elec- 45 tronic device 30 may be separated from wristband 20 in order to permit wristband 20 and covering material 25 to go through a washing process in the absence of electronic device 30. Alternately, for example, electronic device 30 may be interchanged with another electronic device. In some embodi- 50 ments, electronic device 30 may be permanently affixed to wristband 20.

Wristband 20 is at least partially formed from a textile material, for example, and exhibits the general configuration of a conventional wristband. Accordingly, the textile material 55 forming wristband 20 forms a looped or generally cylindrical structure having interior dimensions that approximate dimensions of a wrist.

Although a variety of textile materials are suitable for wristband 20, exemplar textile materials include either a 60 single-sided terry knit textile or a double-sided terry knit textile. Yams forming the terry knit textile may be formed from fibers and filaments that include natural, synthetic, or combinations of natural and synthetic materials.

More particularly, the various terry loops that characterize 65 the terry knit textile may be formed from cotton yarns to promote moisture-absorption and comfort. Other portions of

the textile material forming wristband 20 may incorporate an elastic fiber that enhances the stretch and recovery properties of wristband 20, thereby permitting the circumference of wristband 20 to expand and contact in order to assist with placing apparel 10 upon the wrist and accommodate wrists of different size. A suitable elastic fiber is formed from elastane. which is available from E.I. duPont de Nemours Company under the LYCRA trademark.

Other material elements, in addition to the textile materials discussed above, may be utilized for wristband 20. Wristband 20 may be formed from one or more elements of textile materials that form the looped or generally cylindrical structure. As depicted in FIGS. 1-5, wristband 20 may be formed from a tubular structure of textile material that is folded inward to form a seam 21 circumscribing an interior surface of wristband 20. Alternately, wrist band 20 may have a nonfolded configuration, or wristband 20 may be formed from a planar element of textile material with joined ends that form a seam extending perpendicular to seam 21.

Based upon the above discussion, therefore, wrist band 20 may be formed in a variety of ways and may exhibit a variety of configurations within the scope of the present invention.

The covering material 25 at least partially covers the face of When the electronic device 30 is activated, the display glows through the material and is readable. The covering material may be attached only to the top side of the wristband, for example, or may curve under and be attached to the underside of the wristband.

The covering material 25 may be attached to the wrist band in a permanent, semi-permanent, or removable manner. For example, the covering material may be sewn, stapled, or glued to the wrist band to provide a permanent attachment. Alternatively, the covering material may be attached by Velcro, hooks, buttons, snaps, or other fasteners to provide a removable attachment.

The covering material is generally attached to allow access the face of the athlete, and electronic device 30 may be uti- 40 under the covering material to the electronic device. For example, if the covering material is in the form of a rectangle as shown in FIG. 1, two opposite sides 26 and 27 of the covering material are attached at the periphery to the wrist band 20 allowing access under the material at the two opposite sides not attached to the wrist band 20.

> One side of the covering material (e.g. 26) may be permanently attached, e.g. sewn, and the opposite side (e.g. 27) may be removably attached, e.g. with Velcro. This allows access to the electronic device by lifting the covering material at the side with the Velcro.

> The material covering the electronic device protects the device from harm such as being scratched. The material may be water-resistant. The material is lightweight and allows light from the electronic device, e.g. LED, shine or glow through the material in such a manner that the display can be read. Suitable materials include, but are not limited to polymeric fabrics made from polyesters and polyamides such as

Although covering material 25 may be formed from waterresistant materials, advantages may be gained from forming covering material from an absorptive material. As discussed above, wristband 20 may be utilized to absorb and remove perspiration or other moisture. Electronic device 30, however, forms an area of apparel 10 that may not absorb or otherwise remove perspiration. The inclusion of covering material 25, when formed from an absorptive material, increases the surface area of apparel 10 that may be used to remove moisture. 5

The covering material may be a solid color, the same color or different color than the wristband, or provide a decorative element to the wrist band such as having a pattern or design.

The electronic device can be activated through the material by touch, e.g. depressing a display button. The electronic 5 device may be activated by a button, for example, found on the top, side, or bottom of the device. In a particular embodiment, the electronic device is activated by a button located on the top of the device. The button may be any suitable device to operate the electronic device such as a push button.

The electronic device can be activated in other suitable manners such as voice recognition.

As shown in FIG. 4, wristband 20 defines an aperture 22 that extends through wristband 20. A reinforcing structure 23 formed from a semi-rigid material extends around aperture 22 15 and has a generally rectangular configuration that corresponds with exterior dimensions of electronic element 30. In addition to retaining a shape of aperture 22, reinforcing structure 23 limits fraying or unraveling of the textile material in areas of wristband 20 that are adjacent to aperture 22. The 20 depicted in the figures as performing the function of a timing reinforcing structure 23 may be attached to the wristband in any suitable manner such as stitches or glue.

Reinforcing structure 22 may be formed from a variety of materials, including polymers and metals. Accordingly, suitable polymers for reinforcing structure 23 include nylon and 25 polyurethane, and suitable metals for reinforcing structure 23 include steel, stainless steel, aluminum, and titanium, for example. In some embodiments, reinforcing structure 23 may also be formed from filaments, fibers, or yams that reinforce aperture 22. In further embodiments reinforcing structure 30 may be absent from wristband 20. In yet further embodiments where the textile material forming wristband 20 is primarily formed from a polymer material, reinforcing structure 23 may be formed from areas of the textile material that are adjacent to aperture 22 and melted to form a semi-rigid structure 35 extending around aperture 22. Based upon the above discussion, therefore, aperture 22 and reinforcing structure 23 may exhibit a variety of configurations.

Aperture 22 is spaced inward from edges of the textile material forming a majority of wristband 20. In this configuration, the textile material forming wristband 20 extends entirely and continuously around aperture 22 to effectively define a hole through wristband 20. In some embodiments, however, aperture 22 may be an indentation in an edge of wristband 20 that receives electronic device 30.

Electronic device 30 performs the functions of a timing device that tracks and displays time, records split or lap times, or provides chronographic data. Any suitable electronic device may be utilized in the apparel.

For example, the electronic device depicted in co-pending 50 application Ser. No. 10/987,577 may be utilized with the apparel. In this case, the primary components of electronic device 30 are a case 31, a pair of securing elements 32a and 32b, and circuitry within case 31. Case 31 has a generally box-shaped structure. Securing element 32a and 32b extends 55 around the sidewall surfaces of case 31 adjacent the upper surface and lower surface, respectively. When positioned in the manner discussed above, a gap 35 is formed between securing elements 32a and 32b, as depicted in FIG. 4. Gap 35 effectively forms a peripheral indentation extending at least 60 partially around an exterior of electronic device 30.

Case 31 provides a protective covering for circuitry within electronic device 30 and may be sealed to protect the circuitry from moisture in the form of perspiration or water. An upper portion/surface of case 31 is transparent so that the individual 65 may view a display that is associated with circuitry within case 31. A pair of buttons or other activatable devices (not

depicted) may also extend through case 31 in order to permit the individual to activate or switch between various functions associated with electronic device 30. The circuitry may include the display (e.g., a liquid crystal display, light emitting diode display, an analog-style display), a microprocessor, and a battery, for example, and effectively forms the portion of electronic device 30 that tracks and displays time, records split or lap times, or provides chronographic data.

Aperture 22, electronic device 30, and various other components of apparel 10 are discussed as having a rectangular configuration. In further aspects of the invention, aperture 22, electronic device 30, and the various other components of apparel 10 may have any suitable corresponding shapes that facilitates securing electronic device 30 to wristband 20 and separating electronic device 30 from wristband 20. For example, aperture 22 may have a circular, elliptical, triangular, square, or hexagonal shape, and case 31 may have a corresponding shape.

Although electronic device 30 is discussed above and device, electronic device 30 may be any of a plurality of suitable electronic devices. For example, electronic device 30 may be a heart rate monitor, a pedometer, a global positioning system (GPS) unit, altimeter, compass, thermometer, calculator, or communication device. In addition, electronic device 30 may perform the functions of two or more of the exemplar electronic devices discussed above. More particularly, electronic device 30 may be a combination of a timing device and GPS unit. Accordingly, the functions of electronic device 30 may vary significantly within the scope of the present invention.

With reference to FIG. 5, an article of apparel 10' is depicted without the covering material as having a wristband 20' and a pair of electronic devices 30a' and 30b'. Wristband 20' exhibits a configuration that is substantially identical to wristband 20. Accordingly, wristband 20' is formed from a textile material and also defines an aperture with a reinforcing structure (not depicted). Although not depicted, wristband 20' may also include a material similar to covering material 25.

Whereas electronic device 30a' performs the function of a timing device and is substantially identical to electronic device 30, electronic device 30b performs the function of a GPS unit. During athletic activities where a timing device would be most beneficial, apparel 10' may be configured such 45 that electronic device 30a' is received by the aperture in wristband 20'. During athletic activities where a GPS unit would be most beneficial, apparel 10' may be configured such that electronic device 30b' is received by the aperture in wristband 20'. Accordingly, apparel 10' has a configuration where one of electronic devices 30a' and 30b' may be utilized in combination with wristband 20', and electronic devices 30a' and 30b' may be freely interchanged by the individual. In further embodiments, electronic devices 30a' and 30b' may perform other functions, or additional electronic devices may be available for use by the individual. When wristband 20' is subjected to a washing process, however, both of electronic devices 30a' and 30b' may be removed from the aperture in wristband 20'.

In addition to wristbands, various other types of apparel may incorporate the features of apparel 20 and 20', including gloves, shirts, pants, hats, socks, footwear, underwear, and coats, for example. With reference to FIG. 6, an article of apparel 10" is depicted as having a jacket 20" and covering material 25" which covers an electronic device 30" as shown in FIG. 7. Jacket 20" includes a torso region 21" and a pair of arm regions 22". One of arm regions 22" defines an aperture that receives electronic device 30". One of arm regions 22"

defines an aperture that receives electronic device 30". As with apparel 10 and 10', electronic device 30" is removable from the aperture for purposes of washing jacket 22" or interchanging electronic device 30" with another electronic device. Although electronic device 30" is depicted as being 5 located in a wrist area of one of arm regions 22", electronic device 30" may be positioned anywhere relative to jacket 20" in other aspects of the invention.

The covering material is generally attached to the apparel to allow access under the covering material to the electronic 10 device. For example, if the covering material is in the form of a rectangle as shown in FIG. 6, two opposite sides 26" and 27" of the covering material are attached at the periphery to the wrist band allowing access under the material at the two opposite sides not attached to the wrist band.

Based upon the above discussion, any article of apparel may include an electronic device, such as electronic device 30. The apparel is at least partially formed from a material element that defines an aperture, and the electronic device is locatable within the aperture and removably-securable to the 20 material element. A covering material covers the electronic device wherein when the electronic device is activated, a display is visible through the material.

The electronic device may be a timing device, such as a watch, or a global positioning system unit, for example. The 25 apparel may be a wristband formed from a textile material or any of a variety of other types of apparel.

As shown in FIG. 4, case 31 contains securing element 32a and 32b, respectively. Within case 31 are appropriate components for the electronic device and display such as a light 30 guide, a PCB assembly, a battery, positive battery contact, and a module frame for the components which may be a single piece or multiple pieces. The electronic device is activated or deactivated by depressing a button 33 on the electronic device. The electronic device may have a reset button which 35 electronic device is a timing device. may operated from the bottom of the device, for example.

The bottom edges of case 31 can be rounded to prevent sharp edges and provide a softer feel to the user.

The present invention is disclosed above and in the accompanying drawings with reference to a variety of embodiments. 40 The purpose served by the disclosure, however, is to provide an example of the various features and concepts related to the invention, not to limit the scope of the invention. One skilled in the relevant art will recognize that numerous variations and modifications may be made to the embodiments described 45 to the wristband. above without departing from the scope of the present invention, as defined by the appended claims.

That which is claimed is:

- 1. An article of apparel comprising: a textile element that defines an aperture with a peripheral edge having a non- 50 circular shape; an electronic device positionable within the aperture and securable to the peripheral edge of the aperture, the electronic device also being removable from the aperture, and the electronic device having a non-circular shape; and a flexible covering material attached to the textile element and 55 covering the electronic device, wherein the electronic device cannot be seen though the covering material except, when a display of the electronic device is activated, the display is visible through the covering material.
- 2. The article of apparel recited in claim 1, wherein the 60 textile element is a wristband.
- 3. The article of apparel recited in claim 2, wherein the textile element is at least partially formed from a terry knit material.
- 4. The article of apparel recited in claim 1, wherein the 65 textile element includes a reinforcing structure extending around the aperture and forming the peripheral edge.

- 5. The article of apparel recited in claim 1, wherein the electronic device is a timing device.
- 6. The article of apparel recited in claim 1, wherein the electronic element is a global positioning system unit.
- 7. The article of apparel recited in claim 1, wherein at a least a portion of the covering material is permanently attached to the textile element.
- 8. The article of apparel recited in claim 1, wherein the covering material is sewn to the textile element.
- 9. The article of apparel recited in claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the covering material is removably attached to the textile element.
- 10. The article of apparel recited in claim 1, wherein a portion of the covering material is permanently attached to 15 the textile element and another portion of the covering material is removably attached to the textile element.
 - 11. The article of apparel recited in claim 1, wherein the electronic device has rounded edges.
 - 12. The article of apparel recited in claim 1, wherein a button is located at the top of the electronic device.
 - 13. An article of apparel comprising: a wristband at least partially formed from a textile material, the wristband defining an aperture with a non-circular shape; an electronic device that is locatable within the aperture and securable to the wristband, the electronic device having the non-circular shape; and a covering material attached to the textile material and covering the electronic device, wherein the electronic device cannot be seen though the covering material except, when a display of the electronic device is activated, the display is visible through the covering material.
 - 14. The article of apparel recited in claim 13, wherein the wristband is at least partially formed from a terry knit material.
 - 15. The article of apparel recited in claim 13, wherein the
 - 16. The article of apparel recited in claim 13, wherein the electronic element is a global positioning system unit.
 - 17. The article of apparel recited in claim 13, wherein at a least a portion of the covering material is permanently attached to the wristband.
 - 18. The article of apparel recited in claim 13, wherein the covering material is sewn to the wristband.
 - 19. The article of apparel recited in claim 13, wherein at least a portion of the covering material is removably attached
 - 20. The article of apparel recited in claim 13, wherein a portion of the covering material is permanently attached to the wristband and another portion of the covering material is removably attached to the wristband.
 - 21. The article of apparel recited in claim 13, wherein the electronic device has rounded edges.
 - 22. The article of apparel recited in claim 13, wherein a button is located at the top of the electronic device.
 - 23. An article of apparel comprising:
 - a textile element that defines an aperture; a reinforcing structure that is located within the aperture and secured to the textile element to form a peripheral indentation of the aperture, the reinforcing structure being formed from a material that is more rigid than the textile element: and
 - an electronic device positionable and securable within the aperture, and the electronic device may be separated from the textile element by disconnecting the reinforcing structure and the peripheral indentation; and a covering material attached to the textile element and covering the electronic device, wherein the electronic device cannot be seen though the covering material except,

9

when a display of the electronic device is activated, the display is seen through the covering material.

- 24. The article of apparel recited in claim 23, wherein the textile element is a wristband.
- 25. The article of apparel recited in claim 23, wherein the textile element is at least partially formed from a terry knit material.
- 26. The article of apparel recited in claim 23, wherein the electronic device is a timing device.
- 27. The article of apparel recited in claim 23, wherein the 10 electronic element is a global positioning system unit.
- **28**. The article of apparel recited in claim **23**, wherein at a least a portion of the covering material is permanently attached to the textile element.
- 29. The article of apparel recited in claim 23, wherein the 15 covering material is sewn to the textile element.
- **30**. The article of apparel recited in claim **23**, wherein at least a portion of the covering material is removably attached to the textile element.
- **31**. The article of apparel recited in claim **23**, wherein a 20 portion of the covering material is permanently attached to the textile element and another portion of the covering material is removably attached to the textile element.
- 32. The article of apparel recited in claim 23, wherein the textile element is one of a shirt and a jacket.
- 33. The article of apparel recited in claim 23, wherein the electronic device has rounded edges.
- **34**. The article of apparel recited in claim **23**, wherein a button is located at the top of the electronic device.
 - **35**. An article of apparel comprising: an electronic device that includes a display; and

10

- a covering material element extending over the electronic device, wherein the electronic device cannot be seen though the covering material, except the display being at least partially visible through the material element when the display is activated.
- 36. An article of apparel comprising:
- a first material element:
- an electronic device secured to the first material element, the electronic device including a display modifiable between an unilluminated and illuminated configuration; and
- a second material element secured to the first material element and extending over the display of the electronic device, wherein the electronic device cannot be seen though the second material element except the display being at least partially visible through the second material element when the display is in the illuminated configuration.
- 37. An article of apparel comprising:
- a wristband;
- an electronic device secured to the wristband, the electronic device including a display modifiable between an unilluminated and illuminated configuration; and
- a covering element secured to the wristband and extending over the display of the electronic device, wherein the electronic device cannot be seen though the covering element except the display being at least partially visible through the covering element when the display is in the illuminated configuration.

* * * * *